



Neighborhood Stabilization Program

Program Creates Jobs in the Community

The city of Phoenix received three rounds of funding through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP1, NSP2 and NSP3) from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to address the effect of foreclosures in the city's hardest hit neighborhoods by renovating vacant and abandoned homes, offering buyers homeownership opportunities, incentives and the educational tools to ensure success in the long-term.

The City of Phoenix Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) continues to change the lives of residents in significant ways and to date has assisted more than 250 hardworking families and individuals in their quest for homeownership through the program and offered work to more than 90 contractors. When one house is sold through the NSP it positively impacts a family, a street, a neighborhood and an entire community. Each home includes sustainable energy-efficient systems, upgraded curb appeal, improved design finishes and has had all health & safety issues addressed. The new owner can rest assured that they are purchasing a home that is not only attractive, but has been vastly improved. The Neighborhood Stabilization Program's developers hire qualified contractors to ensure that the work is of the highest quality. The General Contractors working on these homes also create jobs in the community.

Austin Wicevich worked for a large national construction company for years; in January 2010, he was downsized as a result of the decline in the local economy and real estate market. Wicevich, like so many Americans, had to determine what direction to take next; that's when he took the opportunity to start a small business, August Building. He didn't waste any time, Wicevich had his General Contractor's license and began using his prior business contacts to book jobs by June. He began to bid on NSP renovation projects and soon had a consistent flow of jobs which allowed him the opportunity to hire an employee, a carpenter who had been recently put out of work. A few months later, the company hired a second employee who had been underutilized for his skill level; the company is expecting to hire a third employee in the upcoming months. Austin noted that he is "not scared of a challenge and the steadiness of work has enabled me to continue to hire other skilled workers who are in need of jobs." To date, August Building has completed 10 projects through the city's NSP including 5 within the last 90 days.

Wicevich commented on the physical improvements and quality of repairs that the city puts into NSP homes as being above average, with a higher level of energy-efficiency than an investor typically installs stating that real estate investors (flippers) "won't go into these neighborhoods with plans to revitalize them, the city's repairs go above and beyond what an investor will do."

The NSP projects taking place across the city with the level of quality improvements and promise of owner occupants as neighbors has instilled confidence in once down-trodden neighborhoods. A phenomenon is taking place where neighbors take notice of the beautification efforts happening on their street and are inspired to make improvements to their own home. By the time Wicevich completed work on his first NSP home, three homes on the same street had dumpsters in front and were in the process of making improvements. Pride of homeownership is very much alive and projects such as NSP help instill community confidence and create neighborhood synergy. The story of Austin Wicevich and August Building is an example of how NSP creates jobs, keeps small businesses operating and improves Phoenix neighborhoods.

To learn more about the City of Phoenix Neighborhood Stabilization Program, call 602-262-6602 or visit phoenix.gov/nsphome.



Before Photo



Austin Wicevich, August Building



After Photo